

Improved
Uniform
International
SUNDAY
SCHOOL
LESSON

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Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for March 4

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JESUS TEACHES FORGIVENESS

LESSON TEXT—Matthew 18:21-35.
GOLDEN TEXT—If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.—Matthew 6:14, 15.

Forgiveness is the very essence of Christianity. In Christianity only do we find an adequate and proper dealing with sin, leading to forgiveness. In Christ alone do we find that forgiveness, cleansing and regeneration.

Since God has so willingly and wonderfully provided for our forgiveness, it would seem that we would need no urging to make us forgiving in spirit toward one another.

Yet it is indeed a melancholy fact that there are few Christian duties so little practiced as that of forgiveness. It is sad to see how much bitterness, unmercifulness, spite, harshness and unkindness there is among men" (J. C. Ryle).

I. The Extent of Forgiveness (vv. 21, 22).

"How long do I have to stand it?" is the question of the human heart, especially if untouched by the spirit of Christ. The injustices of life, the offenses of our fellow men against us, all seem to pile up until the burden is about to crush us. What is the answer to man's question?

The Jews had an answer. He said three times is enough. Forgive once, yes. Again, yes. But the third time, no. Peter was bighanded enough to more than double that allowance of mercy. He was willing to forgive just two or three times, but seven times.

The spirit of Christ swept all of that aside. He said that one should forgive 70 times seven. In other words, Christian forgiveness is to be untiring, unlimited, to know no weariness and have no boundaries.

If one really forgives, it is because he has a forgiving spirit, and that spirit is not exhausted by use, but rather grows by exercise.

A word of caution is in order at this point. Let no one suppose that our Lord's instruction means that offenses against the law of the land or against the good order of society are to be overlooked and condoned.

It relates rather to the cultivation of a personal spirit of forgiveness, the laying aside of revenge, of malice, of retaliation which do not become the Christian.

II. The Motive of Forgiveness (vv. 23-34).

Two motives are given. The first is that since we ourselves are daily and hourly in need of forgiveness at the merciful hand of God, we should in turn be merciful toward those who sin against us. Compared with our offenses against the law of God, we know that the misdeeds of our neighbors against us are usually mere trifles. Remember what God has done for you, when you are tempted to be hard and ungracious with your brother.

The second motive is the remembrance that a day of judgment is to come. There is always a time of reckoning ahead, even as was the case with these servants. Remember not only what God has done for you and is doing for you, but what you must yet expect Him to do in that day of judgment. It will make you merciful and gracious in your judgment of others.

Forgiveness has a fine quality which commands itself to others. Note the sorrow of the fellow servants (v. 31). There is, then, a social value in true forgiveness.

III. The Importance of Forgiveness (v. 35).

A man dealing with his fellow man is apt to think that it is merely a matter between man and man. We are not dealing with a straight line between ourselves and our brother (that was Peter's error), but with a triangle at whose apex is God Himself.

If I expect God to forgive me, I must let my forgiveness flow out to my brother. If I deal with him as though God had nothing to do with the matter, then I must not try to count God's forgiveness into the picture when I stand indebted before Him.

God does not play favorites. He is no respecter of persons. He is as interested in the other man as He is in me. The Christian should have the same spirit.

Here we need a word of explanation. Let no one suppose that our redemption in Christ is contingent upon what we do toward our brethren. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9).

Nor does the truth of our lesson mean that we are somehow going to bargain with God, trading a bit of our forgiveness toward others for His forgiveness of us. God is not interested in such transactions. But it does mean that if you cannot or will not forgive, you may well consider whether you are a Christian at all, for it is Christlike to forgive.

COME TO CHURCH

Creamed Comments On The Sunday School Lesson

CHURCHES

ST. MARY'S CHURCH

First Mass.....6:00 a. m.
Second Mass.....7:30 a. m.
Children's Mass.....9:00 a. m.
High Mass.....10:15 a. m.
Week day Mass.....7:30 a. m.
Way of the Cross Sunday 2:30 P. M.
Communion Sunday for the
St. Agnes Society.

Tuesday, — Lenten Sermon
7:30 P. M.

Friday—Way of the Cross 7:30
P. M.

Rev. Joseph J. Selmetz, pastor

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Church of God
Glen E. Marshall, pastor

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9:30-11:20 a. m.—Unified service.
6:30 p. m.—Shining Lights. Mrs.

Mary Hazelwood, leader.

6:30 p. m.—Christian Crusaders.

Robert Strickler, counsellor; Bill

Hawkins, president.

7:30 p. m.—Evening service.

7:30 p. m. Wednesday evening—
Mid-week prayer service.

The public is most cordially invited to attend the services of this congregation.

The church where being a Christian makes you a member.

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First United Brethren Church
F. R. R. Wilson, minister

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Sabbath School, 9:15 a. m. Cu-

tis Hill, superintendent.

Morning worship with holy com-

munion, 10:30 a. m.

Christian Endeavor, 6:30 p. m.

Evening worship, 7:30 p. m. Ser-

mon, "Strange Deathbed Compan-

ions."

Quarterly meeting following eve-

ning service.

Prayer meeting and choir practice

Wednesday, 7 and 8 p. m.

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Church of the Nazarene
Marshall and North Seventh Sts.
J. T. Trueax, minister

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Sunday School, 9:30 a. m. Doyle

Lytle, superintendent.

Morning worship, 10:30 a. m.

Special singing by male quartet.

Message by pastor.

Junior church, 6:45 p. m. Mrs.

Plasterer, director. They are study-

ing the life of Christ. See that

your child is there.

Young peoples service, 6:45 p. m.

An other interesting service that

you will not want to miss. The ser-

vice will be different. Special sing-

ing, Bible quiz, and other interest-

ing and spiritual things.

Evening service, 7:30 p. m. Our

church was well filled Sunday

night. Special singing by the male

quartet and message by the pastor.

Come praying, enter worshipping,

depart serving.

Prayer meeting Wednesday, 7:30

p. m.

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First Methodist Church
M. O. Lester, minister

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ANSWERS TO
"DO YOU KNOW?"

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1. What should one do with

things that cause spiritual stumbled?

2. Why did Jesus come into the

world?

3. Who said to Jesus, How often

shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?

4. What will happen a man that

will not forgive another?

5. What is Jesus' estimate of a

little child?

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World Religious News

Home Education

Home Co-operation

The richest comradeship develops among those who work together. The fruits of the soil will grow in this garden, but there will also grow mutual respect and appreciation. Families who work together learn the Christian virtue of bearing one another's burdens by actually bearing them in common tasks.

When the family reads together the bonds of family life are woven into a web of Christian fellowship and understanding. Such an experience enriches the lives of the adults and uplifts the souls of the children.

The center of the home is the family meal. Here not only food is given and received but fellowship, love, and interdependence are shared. All that is best in personal and family life finds its finest growth and expression in the conversation and experiences of the Christian family meal.

MARCH to Church

Some one has said, "On the average, less than 25% of the population in various communities and cities are in church on Sunday." Are you one of the 25%? Take advantage of the freedom to worship.

IN THE MONTH OF MARCH

Sunday School 9:30 A. M. Worship 10:30 A. M.
N.Y.P.S. 6:45 P. M. Evening Service 7:30 P. M.

Church of The Nazarene

Marshall and No. 7th

Decatur, Ind.

CHURCHES

ST. MARY'S CHURCH

Lowell J. Smith, Supt.

"Hand Carved Gods" will be the subject of the morning sermon by the minister.

At the Vesper hour Rev. T. J. Trueax will be the guest speaker. All members are asked to support by their presence these services.

"What our revival should mean to our Church school" will be the topic Lowell J. Smith will use in the mid-week service.

Keep in mind "The Dibble" evangelistic party will be with us Easter Sunday, April 1st and for two weeks. They will be at Grace United Brethren church from March 11th to March 25th. We will want to visit the meetings there and get acquainted with the Bibles.

Church school classes at 9:29 a. m.

First Baptist Church
Carey R. Moser, pastor

9:25 a. m.—Sunday School. C. E. Bell, superintendent.

10:15 a. m.—Morning worship.

Communion meditation by pastor.

Two numbers by the choir. Lord's Supper.

7:30 p. m.—Evening service.

Men's choir, with brief message by the pastor.

Everybody welcome.

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Zion Lutheran Church
Monroe and Eleventh Sts.

Paul W. Schultz, pastor

Sunday School, 9:15 a. m. Gregg McFarland, superintendent.

Morning worship, 10:10 a. m.

Rev. M. O. Herman, district super-

intendent, will preach.

Youth Fellowship, 6 p. m. Intermediate and Senior.

Evening service, 7 p. m. "The Back Door of Life."

Administrative Council, Tuesday evening, 7 p. m.

Married couples club, Wednesday evening, 8:30 p. m.

Missionary society, Thursday, 9 a. m.

Saturday catechism school, 8:30 a. m.

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A righteous God rules our universes; hence, no evil is ever permanent no matter how powerful.

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Special meeting March 18-April 1.

Rev. Leroy Geiger, pastor of Crescent Avenue Evangelical church is the speaker for the first week.

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Zion Evangelical and Reformed

William C. Feller, pastor

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